

**BIG SUR MULTI-AGENCY ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES FOR MARCH 15, 2019
PFIEFFER BIG SUR LODGE CONFERENCE CENTER
47225 HIGHWAY 1, BIG SUR, CALIFORNIA 93920**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Congressman Panetta called the meeting to order at approximately 10:10 am.

II. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Roll call and introductions were made. BSMAAC members in attendance included Martha Karstens (Resident of Big Sur – North Coast), Anneliese Agren (Resident of Big Sur – South Coast), Kirk Gafill (Big Sur Chamber of Commerce), Butch Kronlund (Coast Property Owners Association – now Big Sur Community Association), John Dugan (Monterey County Resource Management Agency), Supervisor Mary Adams (Monterey County, District 5), Caine Camarillo (Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District), Michael Watson (California Coastal Commission), Tim Gubbins (Caltrans), Brent Marshall (California State Parks), Fin Eifert (USFS), Robert Rivas (California Assembly, District 30), Jimmy Panetta (US Congress, District 20).

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A member of the public commented that the October 26, 2018 minutes were excellent. The minutes were approved as presented.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

- **Lisa Deering:** Commented that she has been a South Coast resident for 39 years. Concerned about Caltrans closing gates; it feels like they are living in a gated. Speaking on behalf of residents and Pacific Valley School, they have had 14 days of school closures, residents can't get in and out except by N/F Road. School is having to do home school. Previously, Caltrans had barricades with cones, options to residents for access, their safety first. Pre-emptive closing of gate procedure should be removed. She understands the safety and liability issues for Caltrans but believes they also should think about medical liability for residents.
- **Lindsey Romano** – LUAC South Coast. Concerned about danger of illegal camping at dispersed camping sites, that they are being allowed given built up, dead wood and brush. Noted that she often sees 1-2 camp fires every night during season and that residents have attempted to stop them. Asked what Forest Service will do for enforcement and suggested if they fine an amount like \$5,000 it could pay for itself. Wants the Forest Service to be more responsible for patrolling and fines.
- **Mike Caplin** – Concerned about numerous layers of Federal, State and local agencies regulations that prevent local property owners from managing vegetation and fire fuels. Issue has been acknowledged now but laws are left on the books that prevent people from preparing for wildfires, such as Federal NEPA, State CEQA, Coastal Act, etc. Noted that he is not speaking for Firesafe Council but is on its board. Concerned about the limits what can be done and that laws are counterproductive.

- **Public** – Asked who is overseeing policy enforcement for the Land Use Plan. Specifically concerned about staircase at Soberanes, that it was not been permitted, and is an interruption of critical viewshed. Also concerned about destination travel/shuttle concerns, visual access as the primary access, parking with back country closed, holiday parking, and what happens when Soberanes is re-opened.
- **Wendy Barnett** – Blaze Engineering. Responding to/correcting a comment made at the Board of Supervisors. Blaze is doing okay, not fine, because they are Big Sur.
- **Kerry Frangioso** – Concerned about the pathogen that causes sudden oak death. Referenced information that is posted online. In really wet years, there is rapid expansion, and a wave of mortality in the unburned area, akin to BS Valley, now South Coast. Information will be available about this on April 6th at Garland Park. Also mentioned a grant to look at fire ecology in the area, will look at fuel loads. Will give an update in future.
- **Christopher Kronander** – Bringing up short term rentals, acknowledged that people are against it for good reasons but he's for it with a smart approach to not impact residents. Gave an example of an elder long-term resident going into long term care facility, wants to be able for him to rent short term.
- **Martha Diehl** – Responded that the schedule on the Short-Term Rental ordinance, per from Melanie Beretti, is that it is to be published in two weeks.
- **Hugo Ferlito** – Noted that the marathon is coming up on April 28th, gave thanks for the community's support.
- **Dana Carnazzo** – Bixby Canyon residents, thank you for narrowing the entrance to Old Coast Road. Concerned about filming, would like to see a limit of two permits per year, because it brings Instagram posting visitors, too many people. Want to make the permits expensive. Asked that for there never to be a parking lot at Brazil Ranch. Stated that the LUP's purpose is to pass through, enjoy the visual experience, and only stop where designated to stop. Responded to earlier STR comment that they could rent for six months to a local.
- **Pam Peck** – Commented on the California Coastal Trail, that the six working groups are working diligently, and that all groups were meeting together on March 19th from 4:00 to 6:00pm. She encouraged everyone to attend to discuss potential alignments.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

- None

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Seal and Sea Lion Strandings, Marine Mammal Center

- Power point presentation given by Sunny from the Marine Mammal Center, also coming from Monterey Bay Aquarium. Identified that the rescue program covers 600 miles of coastline; center does research, rehabilitation, and rescues; 600-800 rescues per year, Release of over 350 animals in 2017. Gave an overview of how to help with rescue process.
- **Karen Grimmer** – Asked a question about how much is entanglement is from plastics. Response that they mostly occur near heavy fishing areas.

b. **Big Sur Transportation Demand Management Plan, Caltrans**

- **John Olejnik** opened the presentation about the Transportation Demand Management Plan that Caltrans is undertaking with grant funding. The plan is looking at what, who, and how to manage demand, including things like how to get people out of their vehicles to reduce the number of cars on the highway and potential sites for electric vehicle charging. The planning area includes entire length of the Big Sur coast. Just prior to the BSMAAC meeting, Caltrans made presentations to the Park It! group, and AMBAG meeting, and held a stakeholder meeting.
- **Stephanie Grigsby**, consultant to Caltrans, gave a power point presentation (see attached). She noted her experience in the Tahoe area on their sustainable highways plan and its lessons in how to work with multiple agencies. This effort will be building upon the Big Sur Land Use Plan (LUP) and the Coast Highway Management Plan (CHMP). They are planning to hold meetings on both the north and south ends of the coast and have will have website for making comments (<https://www.sustainablehighway1.com/>). The planning effort will look at what solutions and strategies will be applicable along the Big Sur coast. The presentation included information on their initial data collection, such as average daily traffic, existing traffic count comparisons, a windshield survey, site observations, and crash data.

Public Comments:

- **Honey Williams** – Commented that she learned a lot through the CHMP.
- **Mike Caplin** – Noted that there are other data surveys available. He also requested if they do more surveys, to include a write in option and a question about not doing anything.
- **Pam Peck** – Asked who is getting invitations to the stakeholder meetings?
- **Martha Diehl** – Thanked Caltrans for data and stated that it was valuable. She noted the need for actual counts vs. projections, that a windshield survey should happen over multiple days, and requested that they do not generalize from results of limited survey data. She appreciated inclusiveness and asked that the coordination include people who are involved in different activities, including within multiple Caltrans divisions. She noted that Caltrans could better manage coordination of events, construction, utilities, and planning activities.
- **Martha Karstens** – Requested that they consider bicycle events as part of the effort and noted that there had recently been several groups with more than 250 bicycles coming down the coast.
- **Supervisor Adams** – Mentioned the County’s Special Events Task Force and that she has been working with an expanded group for better coordination on construction projects.
- **Dana Carnazzo** – Noted that there is not a permit for bike events, but that unlicensed groups should be fined. She requested they change the phrase “harvesting people out of cars.”
- **Steve Beck** – Stated that a bike path, where feasible, has been made impossible. However, if Caltrans is planning to pave 35 miles of the highway next year, there is an opportunity to improve instead of just replacing the limited shoulder, with opportunities especially in northern areas.
- **Mike Caplin** – Noted that there is a difference between maintenance and improvements, and that if going above and beyond, CEQA may be required if doing improvements.

- **Tim Gubbins** – Responded that they are planning for this project in a year, that it is in design, and that Caltrans can look at this suggestion. He stated the paving is not going to be limited to maintenance and the project has to go through CEQA.

At this point in the meeting, **Robert Rivas** introduced himself, stating that he is excited to be here. **Sheriff Bernal** also introduced himself, **Commander Garrett Sanders**, and **Deputy Jesse Villaseñor**.

c. Cell Phone Coverage Issues

- **Kathleen Lee** – Introduced the discussion on cell phone coverage issues, first introducing Dr. Michael Stuntz.
- **Dr. Michael Stuntz** – Introduced himself, noting that his son had died in an accident at Garrapata. In that accident, two things contributed, first that there was no way to contact authorities because it was in an area with no cell phone coverage, and second that there was a lack of ability for public safety agencies to communicate with each other. He stated his goal to work with the community to make it safer for everyone.
- **Kathleen Lee** – Stated that Congressman Panetta’s office had convened a group with State Parks, Supervisor Adams, Assemblymember Rivas and AT&T to look at the infrastructure needed and opportunities between Highlands and Bixby. They will continue to work with AT&T to identify technologies such as microcell technologies. She will continue to provide updates as they gather more information. She also mentioned a second piece, AT&T’s project in southern Big Sur Valley to build a new tower at Post Ranch. Construction is anticipated later this year, with it coming online next spring. AT&T is working with the business community and a resident’s stakeholder group, and AT&T needs to identify more projects.
- **Mike Caplin** – Noted that this topic has been an issue for a long time, and he hopes it can look beyond Bixby. He noted that during the Soberanes fire, communication was set up on Coast Guard ship. He thinks the coastal plan update is an opportunity to be able to do cell towers, and also identified offshore windmills, if that were to ever happen, as a place to put other towers.
- **Steve Beck** – Noted the long-time discussion on putting wires underground. He looks forward to new technologies that could get rid of wires. He sees need to coordinate across the utility companies through government involvement, State Parks, USFS and Coastal Commission.
- **Kathleen Lee** – Responded that they will be working with CPUC, that there is a significant cost comparison of undergrounding versus small cell technologies. She noted that there is a federal broadband access grant.
- **Butch Kronlund** – Stated that there is to a back-up generator at Big Sur station site, that AT&T is going to put one in.
- **Anneliese Agren** – Asked about satellite technology.
- **Kathleen Lee** – Responded that they are going to test Big Sur Fire satellite phones.
- **Public member** – Asked if AT&T and Verizon could coordinate with the Army, because they just put in new tower at Willow Creek.
- **Kathleen Lee** - Responded that Congressman Panetta had an upcoming meeting with the Commander at Fort Hunter Liggett and they would look into this.

- **Gerry Malais** – Noted that Monterey County Office of Emergency Services wants to ramp up expansion of Alert Warning service, and that they could work with Cal OES, County IT on the known infrastructure challenges.
- **Martha Diehl** – Noted that the Transportation Demand Management numbers and data being used, particularly information on the number of visitors, may help carriers understand number of people who would actually benefit from improved cell service, that it isn't just residents.
- **Public Member** – Suggested providing the cell carriers be provided with data on traffic.
- **Public Member** – Suggested that satellite opportunities for emergency responders should be pursued.
- **Mike Caplin** – Suggested that they can tap into residents for tower/antenna sites with private landowners.

VII. REPORTS FROM MEMBER AGENCIES:

- **Congressman Panetta** started by recognizing Rick Aldinger's recent award from Monterey County Hospitality Partners.
- **Martha Karstens, North Coast** – Thanked Supervisor Adams for the resolution recognizing her retirement, followed up on the need for bicycle permits, and reported on miscellaneous items as identified in her written report (handout at meeting). She requested that Caltrans consider a permanent berm instead of cones at Bixby.
- **Captain Kelly Cardoza, CHP** – Gave a report on the effort to provide housing to CHP officers. Currently there are two officers assigned as residents, but they haven't had housing. This long-term goal is finally happening, moving forward with a contract to construct, leasing a facility from MGM Capital, and the construction plans are underway and progressing.
- **Annalisa Agren, South Coast** – Prepared a report with an event calendar, gave a brief overview of the information she had compiled, that it could be used to plan for public safety. She also noted the continued difficulties with highway closures, with approximately 20 days of closures since the beginning of year. She noted a concern about law enforcement in the back country and the need for extra coverage during spring break. She also inquired about annual maintenance of dirt roads, will that include mowing, currently hard to pass safely. She also suggested the need to avoid Fort Hunter Liggett during training in July, as well as Car Week. She asked for more law enforcement presence. She mentioned the Jade Festival. She noted that Senator Monning's office was supposed to look further into bike races, including lead times, having an ordinance to provide a remedy for events without permits, including enforcement.
- **Kirk Gafill, Big Sur Chamber of Commerce** – Gave congratulations to Rick Aldinger for his recognition as Hospitality Person of the Year, noting the work Rick has done beyond Big Sur as well as representing Big Sur's interests. He said he was looking forward to spring and was glad to see the highway had been holding up with the winter weather. He noted that Caltrans communications on Paul's Slide and Mud Creek work, acknowledging their notifications have been consistent with their plan, but asked that they evaluate the necessity of preemptive closures, asked that they help CHP in Sacramento to understand the importance resident officers.

- **Butch Kronlund, Community Association of Big Sur** – Gave a brief overview of the new name change from Coast Property Owners Association, noting their background, and the changes to the organization and their agenda. He noted that they are still concerned about land acquisition but growing beyond that, with more diversity of geography, gender on Board, working on proactive planning for disasters, ability to participate more fully in initiatives, take input from community and put it into action to collaborate and solve problems. They are pivoting from the road closures to management of over-visitation or the perception of it, and looking at where system isn't working. He gave the Sycamore Canyon shuttle example, and mentioned that there are two operations plans, (1) shuttle operator, and 2) Parks manage parking lot. He also mentioned the Big Sur Pledge, focusing on visitor behavior and destination management – giving the example from Hawaii Pono pledge – and using social media, the demonstration at Bixby, and website – www.bigsurpledge.org. It is based on the framework of the BSLUP, to keep Big Sur wild and scenic.
- **John Dugan, Monterey County Resource Management Agency** – Stated that they are working on getting the Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance to the Board of Supervisors this spring, and Short-term Rentals to the Planning Commission, with a 30-day review planned in April. He noted the meetings he has had with the LUACs on Big Sur LUP update, that the met six times, that the revisions are under review by the Department, and when done that staff will provide the draft to the community and Coastal Commission.
- **Supervisor Mary Adams, Monterey County** – Thanked Congressman Panetta for his work in DC and mentioned her trips to Washington DC and Sacramento. She mentioned that the LUAC will consider the proposed shuttle at their meeting in April. She hosted a Fire Preparation Meeting in January, and the Board will be hearing a defensible space presentation by the RMA. She would like RMA to consider another look at current regulations and she will support continuing the contract fuel mitigation officer position. Sup. Adams participated in a meeting with Rep. Panetta's office, USFS staff, Jack Ainsworth and Dan Carl on Ventana and the Sycamore Canyon shuttle. She announced meeting on 3/22 with Coastal Commissioner Carol Groom. The Coastal Commission will be meeting in April 10-12 in the Board of Supervisors Chambers.
- **Caine Camarillo, Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District** – Mentioned upcoming April 6th sudden oak death "blitz" at Garland Regional Park. He stated they have had a lot of work from the winter storms, with lots of trees down and other issues that will take time to address. He thanked Blaze Engineering for their support. He mentioned that the environmental review for the Palo Corona Regional Park Development Plan was underway, and lastly mentioned the California Wildlife Day being held the next Saturday from 10:00 to 3:00.
- **Mike Watson, Coastal Commission** – Noted that there will be a local Commission hearing in April, that Executive Director Jack Ainsworth and Deputy Director Dan Carl had made a recent visit to Big Sur, and that they are working on plan to address issues at Ventana, Sycamore Canyon and what could be done at short term. He mentioned that applications from Caltrans, e.g. parking project, had gone to the LUAC, but that he could get names on a list for information and comments. He recognized the concerns about the Limekiln Bridge, visual impacts from steps at Soberanes, that he can look at the permit from five years ago, stating that the revegetation will hopefully help soften those impacts. He also mentioned that they are on a

task force with Cal Fire to look at fuel management in coastal zone and that they are developing an app with information about Big Sur.

- **Tim Gubbins, Caltrans** – Provided a handout with a list of the projects they are working on. He mentioned the Mud Creek and Paul’s Slide areas, that they were waiting for them to dry out from the winter storms and to stabilize, and that they are trying to limit the road closures at those locations to when they are needed for safety. Marla from Parks Management asked if it would be okay for law enforcement and medical responders to have a key to the gates during closures for access. She also mentioned Nacimiento Ferguson Road as a back-up route. There was a request for a combination lock for residents.
- **Kelsey Scanlon, Monterey County OES** – added that they are using social media and have information on their website to keep people informed about disasters. They are working on an update to the Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. They are planning opportunities for public outreach, working on regional evacuation plans, community resilience coordination.
- **Brent Marshall, State Parks** – Noted that their Maintenance Chief is on point to try to help with permits for the CHP housing. He noted the Julia Pfeiffer Burns restroom had been damaged when a redwood fell on it, that they are going for emergency permit to fix it. A retaining wall was also damaged. They are working with Caltrans on the culvert and road issues above the trail. The park is essentially closed and there is no timeline for reopening yet. He shared that the good news that the Point Sur bridges and viaducts are being fixed, and that they work was being done again with a renewed contract. He thanked Jesse for law enforcement support on a recent incident where they had used a drone to find someone hiding. He mentioned they had a recent meeting with Jack Ainsworth from the Coastal Commission. He recognized the new Big Sur Lodge manager Jeanette. Lastly, he mentioned the status of the Carmel Area State Parks General Plan, that the Commission meeting has been pushed back, that there have been lots of changes to plan and that they are substantial, and they will have to recirculate. The meeting is planned in October, with a 90-day review beforehand.
 - There was a brief discussion on the process for community input and comments. Supervisor Adams inquired if the former Navy Base was going to be opened and that she was concerned there had been no community input. The request was made to keep the community informed of projects that are going to happen, broader participation from stakeholders. The new fence at Julia Pfeiffer Burns on the west side was mentioned. There was a response that this was in a Caltrans easement and that the work was to replace a fence to keep people from hiking down.
- **Karen Grimmer, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary** – May 4th is Snapshot Day, and will be the 20th annual year of water quality monitoring of outfalls and streams. They are looking for volunteers. The next Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting will be held on April 19th in Moss Landing. There will be an opportunity for public comment. They are recruiting for open seats.
- **Fin Eifert, U.S. Forest Service** – Their priority has been working on the fuel break to plan for increasing the scale of ecological resilience. They have completed an implementation plan and are seeking funding. They will be doing some work in the near term. The other priority is improving recreational access. They are working with the Ventana Wilderness Alliance on Pine

Ridge trail project, using a Categorical Exemption process to relocate it. They support the Pfeiffer/Sycamore Canyon shuttle and parking lot changes and believe it is a reasonable proposal. They are doing their best with limited resources. At Botchers Gap they have an update to their website that there is no bathroom access.

- **Assemblyman Robert Rivas** – Introduced himself, stated that he is enjoying his new position in Sacramento, and that he is new to Big Sur. He said he would prioritize time in next few months to meet with stakeholders.
- **Congressman Jimmy Panetta** – First said congratulations to Carmel High basketball and the wrestling team. He has started his second term, noting that D.C. is both frustrating and fulfilling. He said they will be investigating and legislating. They are getting back to regular order and holding hearings hadn't been happening, with the examples of the Tax bill and the Farm bill. He is on the following committees: Ways and Means, Budget and Agriculture. He noted the need to get both sides to the table. He has joined the bipartisan For County Caucus, with members composed of 19 Democrats and Republicans that are veterans. He noted that the BSMAAC is an example of what democracy is about. He noted that last year, his office received over 300,000 contacts, compared to 40,000 in Congressman Farr's last year. His office will respond to you and is providing constituent services. He mentioned daylight savings and the Sunshine Protection Act 2002.
- **Mike Caplin** – Made a comment to the Congressman about a bi-partisan problem with the 2002 Wilderness Bill and Ventana Wilderness expansion that moved around Los Padres National Forest. He asked for relief from federal legislation that gets in way of preparing for wildfires and to leave fuel breaks out.

VIII. REPORTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES ON ISSUES PERTINENT TO BIG SUR

None.

IX. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on June 28, 2019 at 10am at the Big Sur Lodge.

X. ADJOURNMENT